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1. African slave trade.

Sir Culling Eardley

THE CASE

OF OUR

WEST-AFRICAN CRUISERS

AND

WEST-AFRICAN SETTLEMENTS

FAIRLY CONSIDERED.

BY THE

REV. GEORGE SMITH, M.A. Oxon.

AUTHOR OF AN "EXPLORATORY VISIT TO THE CONSULAR CITIES OF CHINA."

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GREAT BRITAIN, in the year 1807, consented to abandon her participation in the iniquities of the Slave Trade, which, during an age of comparative moral darkness, she had been willing to bear. Although slavery was still permitted to exhibit its form, and to protract its existence in the colonies, yet henceforth British subjects were prohibited, by the severest terrors of law, from any share in the African Slave Trade. But the battle of slave emancipation in our colonies continued to be fought during another generation: and in spite of the hostility of the West-Indian interest, the terrors of a French revolution, and the slave rebellion in St. Domingo, all alike disingenuously employed to associate the question of slave emancipation with the wild excesses of the Jacobin, and to rob the African Negro of his inalienable birthright,—in 1833 slavery was expunged from the British Statute Book, and the flag of freedom waved over our West-Indian islands. Having sacrificed Twenty Millions sterling on the altar of justice and humanity in accomplishing this act, we were found prepared and willing to follow up the step by a continued annual outlay of treasure and life, which, after all, is a paltry, though righteous, recompence for our past share in the crime. International treaties with the different European Powers were formed,

and the arts of diplomacy have been systematically and perseveringly employed to sweep the African coast clean from the atrocities of the slave ship, and to banish this most pernicious form of piracy from the Atlantic Seas.

And if ever a spark of genuine and allowable patriotic satisfaction can find a place in the bosom of a Christian Briton, it is when he dwells on this bright spot of his country's history. He beholds, in the pursuance of this noblest of moral victories, party interests cheerfully sacrificed, prejudices bravely encountered, jealousies willingly confronted, and national energies nobly expended. He feels that living nations may depreciate, and pseudo-philanthropists may grudge, this her costly outlay; but he appeals with generous confidence to the decision of posterity, and believes that the decision of future history will be just in its award. The testimony of future history has already been anticipated by one of the ablest writers of the junior branch of the great Anglo-Saxon family, from whose mind not even the consciousness of American inconsistency with the grand pretensions of republican liberty could expel the candid concession and generous eulogium:—

"Great Britain, loaded with an unprecedented debt, and with a grinding taxation, contracted a new debt of a hundred millions of dollars, to give freedom, not to Englishmen, but to the degraded African. I know not that history records an act so disinterested, so sublime. In the progress of ages, England's naval triumphs will shrink into a more and more narrow space in the records of our race. This moral triumph will fill a broader, brighter page."*

* Dr. Channing.

But notwithstanding all the past efforts of Britain, we have yet to mourn over the fact, that the Slave Trade in Western Africa has only been checked, and not extinguished; and that, with all our good intentions and purity of motive, we have had, and still have, to contend with difficulties on the part of second and third-rate Powers, which, as long as they are permitted to exist, and until they are removed by a firm diplomatic hand, will considerably neutralize and counteract this expensive effort of national philanthropy.

Without at present anticipating the evidence, which a subsequent part of our argument will render more appropriate in the latter part of this pamphlet, it may here be stated, once for all, that the true question to be considered is not, whether the present system of a cruising squadron has been successful or unsuccessful in extinguishing the Slave Trade; for we admit, that with all the checks that have been opposed to the traffic, the greater part remains still to be accomplished in the work of extinction. The subject of inquiry rather is, whether, on the one hand, more stringent measures cannot and should not be adopted to render that system more effective for the prevention of the Slave Trade; or whether, on the other hand, the British legislature, in a spirit of utter desperation, ought to be called upon to recede from the honourable position which our country has assumed; to take a backward step in the career of national benevolence; to leave the oppressed Negro race in Western Africa to their wretched and inevitable fate; to open anew the flood-gates of the slave traffic; and to suffer the torrent of slavery to flow, as formerly, unchecked in its channel of desolation and blood.

Efforts are made by some of the leading journals* to excite a disposition in the public mind to retrace our steps on this important question; a question which is not one merely concerning the short-lived interests of our commercial prosperity or national power, but which involves interests of so transcendant and affecting a character, as to have a direct bearing on the moral and social well-being of a vast continent, and ultimately on the penetration of Christian light into the dark interior of that devoted land.

It is a fact also, too manifest to escape notice, that many of our politicians evince a disposition to abandon

* The writer of a leading article in the "Times" of February 5th, 1848, gravely proposes the following measure for the relief of the West-Indian interest from the ruin asserted to be the consequence of emancipation:—

"From all this meddling there follows one result. We are bound for the consequences, and are now called on to do something. We must mend what we have contributed to break. The measures of aid most likely to be of permanent utility are a matter for inquiry. One thing, however, we may say, by way of illustration: *Were we to apply our money and ships in buying, on the African coast,* 50,000 *head of Negroes a year, and landing them free in our West-Indian ports, it would tend far more to the prosperity of our islands, and to the suppression of the Slave Trade, than all that our settlements and cruisers have done, with the balance of expense very much in our favour.*"

We may doubtless thank the writer of these sentiments for his candour and plain speaking. We may gather the real desires and intentions so frequently screened behind a depreciation of the effects of African cruisers and African Missions. The writer would have us revert to a system of virtual Slave Trade, by purchasing from their barbarous chiefs a few hundred thousand of Negroes, who are to be conveyed by force to the West Indies, and there *to be landed free!—free* (it is to be presumed) in every thing except the necessity of working on the estates on the conditions imposed by the planters. This *freedom* differs from slavery only in name.

the preventive system as ineffectual, and to console themselves in the idea that British responsibility has ceased in the utter hopelessness of the case. Public parsimony has, too, its advocates: an impatient outcry is raised against the asserted useless outlay of public wealth; so that discouragement at supposed failure, and false views of public economy, exert their combined influence in causing forgetfulness of our debt to Africa, and lukewarmness in the cause of slave abolition.

It will be the object of these pages,

I. To consider the influence of the system of preventive cruisers in checking the Slave Trade.

II. To describe the various agencies for the diffusion of Christian civilization on the African coast, which have been in operation under the protection of our cruisers.

III. To suggest those practical measures of a remedial kind which may render the present system of cruisers more effective for the speedy abolition of the African Slave Trade.

I. In perusing the voluminous documents which are, from time to time, submitted to the British Parliament, on the various subjects arising out of the Slave Trade, the conviction will be fixed in every candid mind, that we are now arrived at a crisis in the history of this most important question; that the present period is one full of hope and promise; and that the withdrawal of our cruisers from the African coast, at this time, would be a suspension and cessation of our preventive system, at a moment when the obstacles to success are, to an unprecedented extent, diminished, and the ultimate suppression of the Slave Trade appears nearer than ever within our grasp.

1. Our first position in support of this view of the subject will be, that the *system of preventive cruisers has only at a comparatively recent period had a fair trial in the suppression of the Slave Trade.* This will be at once admitted on the mere recital of the successive treaties between Britain and other European Powers.

In the year 1817 Great Britain concluded treaties with other Powers, containing clauses granting the right of search; but those treaties were so defective, from various causes, as to render the cruisers almost useless. The principal difficulty lay in the absence of the right of capturing vessels, which, though fully equipped for the Slave Trade, had no slaves on board. The effect of this absence of an equipment clause was to enable the slave dealer to arrange his plans leisurely, to watch his opportunity of shipping his slave cargo, and to put to sea when it best suited his prospect of eluding the cruisers. From the year 1817 the Slave Trade has been principally, and, for the greater part of the intervening period, almost entirely carried on by Spain, Portugal, and Brazil, the last being, at that time, a colony of Portugal. The treaty with Portugal even contained an express prohibition against the seizure of Portuguese vessels "on any pretence whatever" in south latitude; the avowed object being to secure a supply of slaves to the Brazils. The Spanish treaty of 1817 stipulated for the continuance of the Spanish Slave Trade south of the equator for three years; after which the treaty came into force equally in both hemispheres. Under the defects of these treaties the slave dealer could bring his vessel fully equipped with slave-decks, water-casks, and provisions; could land the merchandize required in his barter for slaves; could collect at leisure his complement of Negroes on the shore; could send out empty vessels to decoy

away any cruiser in the offing; and could thus take measures for effecting security from chase and capture: so that all the vigilance and zeal of the preventive squadron was effectually baffled by the cunning of the slave traders.

"No impression could possibly be made, even had the force employed been increased tenfold, on a traffic so lucrative by a proportion of captures so extremely small as could be effected under such circumstances. This state of things continued until the year 1835, when Spain concluded a new treaty with Great Britain, granting the right to seize vessels equipped for the Slave Trade, although no slaves were on board; a concession calculated to convert a slave voyage into an undertaking of real risk and difficulty. The only effect, however, of this concession was, to place the whole traffic north of the equator under the protection of the treaty between Great Britain and Portugal of 1817; for the flag of the latter was readily sold to every slave vessel, not only in the Portuguese colonies, but almost at every port where a Portuguese authority was to be found."

"The treaty with Portugal of 1817 was thus perverted, and her flag entirely neutralized the treaty concluded with Spain of 1835; for under the circumstances above described, the Spanish Slave Trade became nominally Portuguese, and continued to be prosecuted with precisely the same degree of impunity as if the Spanish treaty of 1817 still remained in force, and that of 1835 had never been concluded."

"So much for the conduct of Portugal north of the equator; but in the south latitude the evil and the dishonesty was yet more enormous. In the year 1826 the independence of the Brazils rendered it impossible that any lawful slave voyage could thereafter be

undertaken under the flag of Portugal, because that event deprived Portugal of her Transatlantic possessions, to which alone, according to the express terms of her treaty, a slave voyage could be lawfully directed. The Government of Brazil, shortly after the separation from the mother-country, declared the traffic piracy, and granted the right of search and seizure to Great Britain. But this was obviously fruitless, as the whole Slave Trade of Brazil was immediately transferred to the flag of Portugal; and the Portuguese Government continued to insist upon the prohibition to molest a vessel south of the equator 'on any pretence whatever.' Under this plea Portugal was suffered to cover the whole Brazilian Slave Trade of 90,000 slaves per annum, with perfect security, from the year 1826 until 1839. It must not be supposed that Great Britain saw the whole Slave Trade thus completely protected by the flag of Portugal without remonstrance. Her remonstrances were incessant, but all in vain. On one pretence or other Portugal repeatedly refused to modify the treaty: she sometimes pretended to entertain and consider drafts of new treaties; but some pretext was constantly found to escape from any conclusion of them. After the Slave Trade had thus continued to be pursued under the Portuguese flag—in one hemisphere for four years, and in the other for thirteen—at length Great Britain resolved on finding a remedy herself, all appeal to the humanity and honesty of Portugal proving ineffectual. In the year 1839 orders were issued by Her Majesty's Government to seize all Portuguese slave vessels, whether met with north or south of the equator, and whether found actually carrying slaves, or only equipped for the purpose." . . . .

"1839 may, therefore, be considered as an era in the

history of the Slave Trade, when, for the first time, suppression became possible."*

It is necessary to bear in mind that the Treatise of Sir T. F. Buxton on the horrors and extent of the African Slave Trade was published in the early part of the year 1839; and that his renewed statements on the ineffectiveness of the cruising system in the Introduction to the Second Edition were made in the year 1840, a period much too early to appreciate the effects of the altered system and increased facilities of 1839, and at a time when the numbers of the cruising squadron were greatly diminished, in consequence of the war with China.†

2. But even with the augmented facilities of the equipment clauses, *a variety of counteracting influences of the most serious kind exist to retard the success of the preventive cruisers.*

In Dr. Madden's Report, and in the evidence taken before a Special Committee of the House of Commons in 1842, it is continually apparent that British manufactures, to a great extent, supply the medium of barter between the slave dealers and the Native Chiefs on the West-African coast. The Committee in their Report distinctly recognise the fact, though they were prevented from recommending any prohibitory enactment against this indirect participation in the slave traffic by the difficulty of prevention. "It is no doubt galling to a zealous and gallant officer engaged in the service of his country and humanity, in watching anxiously a well-known slaver's haunt, to

* See Hon. Capt. Denman's Evidence before the Duke de Broglie and Dr. Lushington, 1845, pp. 23—25.

† See Captain Butterfield, R.N. Evidence before the same British and French Commission, 1845, p. 12.

see foreign vessels, still more vessels bearing his own country's flag, passing inwards, and supplying those goods, though innocent in themselves, which are the medium of an atrocious traffic."*

There are some observations in Dr. Madden's Report which are painfully illustrative of this part of the system. He writes—"There is one part of the trade of this country connected with that of the foreign slave dealers, which also calls for attention, namely, the manufacture and exportation of slave irons or shackles. In the latter part of 1840 an order was sent to a manufacturer of Birmingham for two assortments of these shackles, each of 30 cwt., probably amounting to 3000 fetters. The party refused to execute this order; but it was executed by another house at West Bromwich, near Birmingham."†

The consequence of this indirect participation in the slave traffic is, that public opinion is necessarily lowered on the evils of the Slave Trade in those colonies, in which such a moral influence would be doubly valuable in hastening the downfall of the odious system.

In the course of the evidence before the Parliamentary Committee, the following facts were stated‡:—

A notorious slave dealer named De Souza, formerly a Spanish nobleman, and banished from his country, has effected a location for some years at a well-known slave factory at Whydah, a place between two and three hundred miles to the east of Cape-Coast Castle.

* Report from Select Committee of House of Commons on West Coast of Africa in 1842, p. xx.

† West-African Commissioner's Report in 1841, pp. 22, 23, of Appendix to Report from the Select Committee.

‡ Evidence before Committee of the House of Commons in 1842, p. 116. Answers 2274—2287.

Here he has been engaged in the territories of the King of Dahomey as the principal agent in supplying the external Slave Trade. And yet not only were the ordinary matters of commercial intercourse transacted between De Souza and the British subjects who visited this locality, but also De Souza appeared to be the public host to the captains of the merchant vessels.

The following questions and answers passed between the chairman and Capt. H. Dring:—

Q. "Has Mr. De Souza been much in intercourse with the captains of English vessels?"—"Yes; we generally used to go up there when we landed."

Q. "He kept a hospitable house?"—"Yes; somebody under him there keeps the house: he keeps an open house for any merchants that go there."*

In contemplating such scenes as these, we may well exclaim, in the language of Dr. Madden, "It is the unfortunate tendency of long residence in this pernicious climate to paralyze our energies, and to familiarize our senses with objects heretofore obnoxious, and to lead us down at last to a quiet acquiescence in the sentiments and interests of others, however adverse originally to our own. In fact, the frequency of any evil becomes a sanction for its continuance, and the number of the inhabitants participating in the benefits derived from it too often is a sufficient reason for refusing to meddle with it."†

Another obstacle to the success of the preventive system is to be seen in the fact that the British Government has been, till very recently, almost the only

* Evidence before Committee of the House of Commons in 1842, p. 113. Answers 2209 and 2210.

† West-African Commissioner's Report in 1841, p. 24 of Appendix to Report from Select Committee of House of Commons in 1842.

party thoroughly in earnest in the suppression of the Slave Trade. It is notorious that the sympathies of the public mind are in favour of the slave captain and crew, in all the ports of adjudication, except in British territory. The foreign judges on the Mixed Commission, even at Sierra Leone, so frequently evince this feeling, that every subterfuge is employed to facilitate the acquittal of a slaver; and it is, in some cases, almost impossible to obtain a conviction. It was not long ago when the Brazilian Commissioner to the Court of Adjudication at Sierra Leone arrived at the scene of his judicial functions as a passenger on board a slave vessel from Brazils; and although a remonstrance on the part of the British Government led to his subsequent recall, yet the fact itself may afford some proof of the counteracting influences with which the present system has to contend.

The large profits of a successful slave voyage, combined with the light penalty inflicted on the crews of slavers, form also a portion of the difficulties. "If a slaver gets his cargo of slaves safe over once in three times she makes a fair mercantile voyage; if twice, they make something very great; and if they get three over safe, a man has never any occasion to be again engaged in it." *

"There are instances on record in the Parliamentary Reports of the proceedings of the Mixed Courts of Justice, showing that a single vessel, called the Venus, in the year 1839, cleared £40,000 in a single slave-trading voyage from the coast of Africa to the Havannah." †

* Commander Broadhead, R.N. Evidence before Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1842, p. 130. Answer 2520.

† West-African Commissioner's Report in 1841, p. 265 of Appendix to Report from Select Committee.

The large pecuniary profits are in no degree counterbalanced by a corresponding measure of personal danger to the parties in the event of capture by the cruisers. "As things are now managed, the confiscation of a slave vessel affects only the owners and the underwriters; and the parties who navigate the condemned vessel are constantly seen to embark again, on a second illegal voyage, a few days after the termination of the first. The complete personal impunity which attends the agents by whom illegal Slave Trade is carried on, combined with the high wages by which their services are secured, renders the Slave Trade, notwithstanding all its inconveniences, the most desirable employment for the Spanish and Portuguese sailor."*

An eye-witness of the present system relates—"There is no power of punishment vested in this country for the crews of those slave vessels; and the crews of the slavers may fire upon, and do fire upon, and wound and kill British seamen in Her Majesty's cruisers, and we cannot touch them: there are instances without number: there is an instance this very year." "When I was on the coast," he continues, "the only slave crew that I saw were well treated. They were landed at Fernando Po, and rationed at the hospital upon half rations, or two-thirds rations; and all the punishment they got was, being kept there very comfortably, and, when an opportunity offered, being sent over to Calabar, to join some of their own countrymen."†

When to all these counteracting influences are added the national jealousy and want of confidence which prevent two of the most powerful nations of Europe

* H. W. Macaulay, Esq. Evidence before Select Committee in 1842, p. 296. Answer 5196.

† M'Gregor Laird, Esq. Evidence before Committee of the House of Commons in 1842, p. 336. Answers 5659 and 5665.

and America, viz. France and the United States, from making a full concession of the mutual right of search, it will easily be seen that the course of British philanthropy in arresting the evils of the Slave Trade has been obstructed by difficulties which would long since have involved an enterprise less sacred and humane in discouraging and hopeless failure.

3. Another serious drawback to past success, which must be taken into account in judging of the efficiency of the cruising system, when divested (as it will hereafter be shown it may be) of these its accidental, and, it is to be hoped, its temporary obstructions, consists in the fact, that, in spite of all the treaties for the suppression of the Slave Trade, *the flag of Portugal till recently was not only systematically prostituted to screen the slave ship* *, *but also Governors of Portuguese settlements frequently and openly abetted and assisted the slave dealer.*

The proofs of this assertion are unhappily too numerous in the evidence of Naval Commanders from the West-African Station, taken in 1845 before the Mixed Commission of Britain and France, and presented to the House of Commons in the course of the past year.

One of the most distinguished and energetic of our naval officers engaged on the cruising stations stated, in the course of his examination, some of the discouraging obstacles with which the cruisers have to contend. He mentions the disheartening partiality and leniency of the Spanish, Portuguese, and Brazilian authorities, who, after a few days' imprisonment, al-

* Since the last treaty with Portugal in 1842 rendered the Slave Trade a punishable offence, the Portuguese flag has not been used; but Portuguese vessels are now captured either under Brazilian colours, or without any flag.

lowed the convicted crews of slave ships to go free immediately on the departure of the British cruiser which captured them, even in cases in which they have fired into our boats and killed several British seamen.* The same witness, in reply to the question, Whether, according to his experience, the Portuguese authorities connived at the Slave Trade being carried on, stated, "The most notorious slave dealer upon the coast was also the Governor of Bissao, Caetano Nossolino. When I was there he carried on the Slave Trade from the walls of the fort."

Another naval officer employed on the same station, after stating that the Slave Trade on the parts of the coast south of the equator, belonging to Portugal, was carried on chiefly from the Portuguese forts, or close to them, was asked the following question—"To the best of your knowledge and belief, did the Portuguese authorities offer any impediment to carrying on the Slave Trade from their territories?" He replied, "I do not think they ever did. There was a kind of mock impediment, perhaps. We used to get information from the boats that the Governor had left his house to go to his country-seat. We then immediately ran close into the port, and, during his absence, we generally took something coming out; but it was evident that he went away in order to be out of the way. Whenever we heard of the Governor going to his country-seat we always laid out for it, and we never failed."†

Another naval commander‡ testifies to the same

* Hon. Captain Denman, R.N. Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 32.

† Captain E. H. Butterfield, R.N. Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 10.

‡ Captain G. Sprigg, R.N. Ibid. pp. 15—17.

corrupt connivance in the Portuguese settlements of Loanda and Benguela; and although, by the praiseworthy exertions of this officer, a remonstrance with the Portuguese Government led to the dismissal of the Governor of the latter place, yet it is palpably clear that Portugal has, even at a recent period, afforded her national protection to the traffic. Within a quarter of a mile of a corvette of 18 or 20 guns, belonging to the Queen of Portugal, at anchor in the roadstead of Benguela, five slave vessels lay secure from molestation, either equipped, or with their slaves on board; and one vessel was captured by a boat of the British cruiser with 440 slaves already embarked.

The same dishonest participation in the iniquitous system has been pursued with even greater openness, because with less probability of detection by our cruisers, on the eastern coast of Africa. A naval captain relates that, in the year 1839, ships, with an average cargo of 1000 slaves, were embarking their complement of human beings at Mozambique "in the very harbour under the Governor's palace, not 200 yards from the Governor's palace;" and that it was a matter of perfect notoriety that the Portuguese local Government not only encouraged and connived at the Slave Trade, but also "received two dollars for every slave embarked."*

4. By far the most serious obstacle, however, to the effectiveness of our cruisers, because the most difficult of removal, is to be found in the virtual and direct participation of the United States in the Slave Trade. *Her flag virtually screens the slave ship up to the moment of embarking the slaves, by directly supplying the materials of slave barter, and by the sale of vessels to the slave dealer.*

* Captain J. Adams, R.N. Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 34.

Mr. President Van Buren, in December 1840, in enforcing his recommendation to the American Congress of some special enactment for the prohibition of this virtual participation in the slave-traffic, employs the following remarkable language; and every true American patriot will join with the friend of the oppressed African, in praying that sentiments so generous and enlightened may speedily pervade the whole national mind on this question:—"I submit to your judgments, whether this Government, being the first to prohibit by adequate penalties the Slave Trade, the first to declare it piracy, should not be the first also to forbid to its citizens all trade with the slave factories on the coast of Africa, giving an example to all nations in this respect, which, if fairly followed, cannot fail to produce the most effective results in breaking up those dens of iniquity."

The whole subsequent course of American policy has been, unhappily, at variance with the high moral tone assumed in this message to Congress. The Government of the United States, actuated by a spirit of national vanity, and deterred by an imaginary catalogue of vexatious interruptions to their commerce, has been found by experience to be the most unwilling of maritime powers to enter into treaties, and to afford hearty co-operation in the suppression of the Slave Trade.

On the testimony of the French naval officers*, the few American cruisers on the West-African station are perfectly ineffective for the purpose of prevention. While the subjects of other nations incur risk, even by indirectly supplying the manufactured goods which find their way to the slave factory; on the other hand,

* M. E. Bouet Willaumez. Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 50.

vessels come from America with the direct design of changing their merchandize for slaves, and "the American colours serve to cover the commerce as far as the slave factory."*

An authority already quoted gives also the following explanation of the details of this participation in the traffic:—"The American vessel comes to the slave market. After having traded in different parts of the coast they finish by stopping at a slave market, often two at a time: one of the ships is sold; every thing that is on board the one is transferred on board the other; and as soon as the ship is positively sold, the cargo of slaves is embarked, and the ship sails an hour afterwards with its cargo. I had this information from a slaver himself."† So flagrant is this subserviency of American commerce to the Slave Trade, and so powerful is the obstruction, produced by the continued refusal of the right of search by the American Government, to the suppression of the traffic, that a certain class of vessels, known by the name of Baltimore clippers, are, on account of their qualities of cheapness and fast sailing, built in the United States, and openly taken to Africa for sale to the slave factor. The following quotation from the examination of a naval captain‡, who commanded a British cruiser on the African coast from 1839 to 1842 inclusive, will convey some idea of the enormity and extent of this counteracting influence.

Q. "Do you know whether many vessels under the American flag carry on the Slave Trade?"

A. "The American flag is used to bring over the

* M. Fleuriot de Langle. Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 61.

† M. E. Bouet Willaumez. Ibid. p. 41.

‡ Captain G. Sprigg, R. N. Ibid. p. 21.

goods, and with all the fittings in them. I have been on board of them, and they have had every thing ready to take the slaves."

Q. "Do they convey the slaves under American colours?"

A. "No; they throw the American flag away when the slaves are on board."

Q. "Is it not the fact, that vessels come to the coast laden with cargoes for the purpose of purchasing slaves, assuming an American character, and that when they have got the slaves they assume another character?"

A. "Yes, they do."

Q. "For this purpose, that the American flag protects them in going into the port? You cannot touch a vessel laden with a cargo, if you know it to be an American vessel?"

A. "Just so."

5. But in spite of these obstacles, *on the testimony of experienced naval officers, British and French, engaged on the cruising stations, the suppression of the Slave Trade at no distant period is rendered feasible and comparatively easy by the continued employment of cruisers concurrently with other means within reach.*

In the evidence taken before the mixed British and French Commission in 1845, a perfect unanimity of opinion is observable among the naval witnesses on this point. Each had his own peculiar system of combined agency, for the more speedy and effectual suppression of the Slave Trade; but each plan was to be employed concurrently with the continued services of the cruisers. The civilization of the native tribes, the erection of forts, the encouragement of legitimate trade, a strict blockade of the Slave-Trade

localities, the destruction of slave-factories, and the conclusion of treaties with the African princes, all found in turn their advocates; but were all recommended in connexion and combination with the continued employment of cruisers as a certain means of ultimate success.

Captain Denman, R. N., estimated the probable length of the West-African coast over which the Slave Trade extends as including, at intervals, the whole distance from Cape Verd, in about 15° north latitude, down to beyond Loanda, in 20° south latitude. Below this point he deemed the traffic impossible, from the nature of the coast. The whole extent of distance, he thought, would amount to about 3000 miles. After making this large estimate of its entire distance, he was, in the course of his examination, asked the following questions:—

Q. "Do yo think it would be possible to blockade that extent of coast, so as to stop the Slave Trade?"

A. "Yes; I think it is possible to blockade all the places where the Slave Trade is carried on within those limits."

Q. "So that, assuming that a sufficient force could be obtained, you could effectually prevent the Slave Trade?"

A. "I have not the slightest doubt of it."*

Similar, also, is the testimony of Captain Trotter, R. N., in whose examination the following passage occurs:—

Q. "You have said, that in order to put an end to the Slave Trade two things are requisite; namely, the employment of external force, and the civilization of Africa. By *the employment of external force*, you mean so large a number of ships engaged in the suppression

* Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 30.

of the Slave Trade as to render the carrying on of that trade exceedingly difficult, if not impossible ?"

A. "That is exactly what I mean."*

Captain Sprigg, R.N., is equally sanguine as to the practicability of suppressing the Slave Trade by external force. He states his belief that the traffic may be comprised between Cape Verd to the north, and the River Guborro to the south, extending from 15° north to 15° 30′ south, and embracing in all about 2300 miles of coast. The following passages occur in his examination :—

Q. "Out of these 2300 miles of coast, how many miles would you say there are where the Slave Trade cannot, from natural causes, be carried on ?"

A. "I should say that the parts of the coast where the Slave Trade can be carried on might be all comprised in 300 miles."

Q. "Do you believe it would be possible to blockade the whole of that 2300 miles of coast, along which the trade extends, so as perfectly to prevent the Slave Trade ?"

A. "No doubt it is possible, with force enough."

Q. "With a sufficient quantity of ships of war and steamers ?"

A. "Undoubtedly."†

M. E. Bouet Willaumez is equally decided as to the practicability of suppressing the Slave Trade by a blockading squadron of cruisers, the term blockade being used in the sense which it bears in reference to a time of war, and implying a rigid interdiction of all commercial intercourse with the localities so blockaded.

Q. "Knowing the coast of Africa as you do, do you

* Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 6.

† Ibid. p. 18.

think it possible to blockade all the points at which the Slave Trade is carried on, so as to suppress it entirely ?"

A. "Certainly."

Q. "Do you think it would require a greater number of vessels than could be obtained ?"

A. "I think not."*

Captain Adams, R.N., who has spent many years on the west, south, and east coasts of Africa, gives similar testimony as the result of his acquaintance with the cruising system. He states that four cruisers are sufficient to blockade 100 miles of coast, and that the greatest difficulty appeared to him to consist in "the want of men-of-war ;" and concludes by recommending "the sending a great many men-of-war, a very large force, and establishing some people on different points of Africa."†

6. It may also be shown, that already, even in the absence of those remedial measures for giving a proper measure of effectiveness to the present system of prevention, which will be made a subject of more lengthened consideration at the close of this pamphlet, *the cruisers, although contending with such multiplied difficulties, have produced important results in checking the Slave Trade generally, and in abolishing it entirely over a considerable part of the coast.*

Such a mass of documentary evidence exists in support of this assertion, that it will only be possible to extract a few passages. That the Slave Trade is extinguished along the whole extent of the Gold Coast is stated in evidence by Captain Vidal, R.N., formerly engaged in the survey of the coast. In his examination before the Special Committee of the House of

* Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 43.

† Ibid. pp. 37, 38.

Commons in 1842, he states, that on the Gold Coast no trade is carried on in slaves; that there are no grounds for believing that the Slave Trade exists in the interior behind those settlements, within a reasonable distance; and that the people are living secure from the effect of the Slave Trade.*

Mr. J. A. Clegg, for many years a supercargo on board a merchant vessel from Liverpool, states, that whereas, formerly, there were frequently as many as fifteen or sixteen slavers at one time in the Bonny River, during his last voyage he did not see one slaver there. This locality is some hundreds of miles east of the Gold Coast, where it has been stated that the Slave Trade is completely extinct.†

Even on the intermediate points of coast, commonly called the Slave Coast, which have been for some time the principal slave-dealing haunts north of the line, Captain Dring, a master of a merchant vessel, who has traded for many years to that part of the coast, asserts, that at the principal slave marts, Popo and Whydah, very little traffic remained in slaves, and that he attributed this diminution to the services of the cruisers, as well as to the increase of legitimate trade.‡

H. W. Macaulay, Esq., late a judge on the Mixed Commission at Sierra Leone, makes the following statement as the result of his observation and experience:—"You may knock up the Slave Trade on any part of the coast you please, if the cruising is properly conducted. The largest Slave Trade on the coast was the Slave Trade at the Gallinas: by the system of

* Evidence before Committee of the House of Commons in 1842, p. 22. Answers 313, 319, 324, and 326.

† Ibid. p. 90. Answer 1592.

‡ Ibid. pp. 108. 110. Answers 2048, 2049, and 2099.

blockade that Captain Denman adopted there he completely destroyed it."*

Captain H. D. Trotter, R. N., in his evidence before the British and French Commission in 1845, stated, that during the interval between his two visits to the African Coast, in 1834 and 1841, the "number of slaves had diminished to a comparatively small amount;" and that when he ascended the Niger "the number had become very small indeed."†

More decided, if possible, is the language of Commander Broadhead, R. N., who was on the station from 1837 to 1841.‡ At Popo, Whydah, and Lagos, the three principal slave ports on the Slave Coast, he states the traffic to be "comparatively at an end." He considers that the Equipment treaties, fully and vigorously carried out, as under the energetic command of Captain Denman, afford every facility for the extinction of the system, and "have knocked the thing up completely." He mentions, as a fact within his knowledge, that the difficulty and risk of a slave voyage was so suddenly and greatly increased, that no slave vessels could be insured at any price in the Havannah. He states that "the Slave Trade at the Bonny and at Calabar has been done up these three years: it is not carried on at all." And, in another part, he makes an assertion, which throws considerable light on the real progress of Slave-Trade abolition, and is, once for all, a reply to the groundless statements so frequently made in this country by parties adverse to the continuance of our cruisers on the African Coast:—"No-

* Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, p. 285. Answer 5064.

† Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 6.

‡ See Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, pp. 125—133. Answers 2454, 2482, 2488, 2518, 2557, and 2570.

thing can be more exaggerated, in my opinion, than the accounts of slaves carried from the Coast of Africa. I have seen accounts in the papers of thousands of slaves being taken from the place where I have been anchored at the very time the slaves were said to have been taken away: I have been anchored there for fifty days before and fifty days after the period fixed on, and there has not been a vessel near the place, and I have seen in the papers in England that they have been taking away thousands."

The most important testimony as to the effects of the cruising system, vigorously carried out, remains yet to be quoted. Captain Denman states in 1845—"Towards the end of 1840, when this system of blocking up the slave factories had already produced a very uncommon number of captures, and a marked consequent decrease of the Slave Trade, the Gallinas, a favourite dépôt of the Cuba Slave Trade, was destroyed. This dépôt contained factories from which at least 12,000 slaves were annually shipped for that island. About the same time, New Cestos, a large branch factory in the neighbourhood, under the sole pressure of the system of cruising before described, was abandoned by the slave factor in despair. The consequence of these combined proceedings, now adopted for the first time, may be traced in the returns of the Cuba Slave Trade. In 1840 the import of slaves was reduced to 14,000; in 1841 to 8000; in 1842 to 3000. Prior to the year 1839 the lowest estimate gave an importation of 60,000 slaves into Cuba." *

We may conclude this part of our subject by quoting a portion of the close of the Report of the Parliamentary Committee in 1842, bearing in mind that some of

* Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 26.

the facts adduced by the last quoted witness were not brought in evidence before them, and consequently exerted no influence in producing their judgment.

"Happily, in this great work we need not despair. The measures lately adopted have doné much. The evidence of all the naval officers, as well as commanders of merchant ships, concurs in stating, that, north of the Line, over a coast of many thousand miles, the Slave Trade, with the exception of a few points in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone and the Gambia, is virtually extinct. And the continuance of these measures, well guarded and considered in all their details, as well as extended, together with such as we have recommended in different parts of our Report, give fair ground for hoping for ultimate success."*

II. The second proposal was, *to describe the various agencies for the diffusion of Christian civilization on the African Coast which have been in operation under the protection of our cruisers.*

Before we proceed to describe the various Missionary agencies on the African coast, it will be important to show that the cruisers really exert a considerable influence in protecting, not only Christian Missions, but also legitimate commerce, from the continual interruptions of war and bloodshed. Facts are frequently occurring which prove, that, on the withdrawal of the protection of the cruisers, every portion of the coast on which legitimate trade is now gaining a footing would be plunged anew into the horrors of the slave traffic, and a King Peppel would start into existence on every point of the African shore. No confidence can be placed in the Native Powers ex-

* Report from Select Committee of House of Commons on West Coast of Africa in 1842, pp. xx. and xxi.

ecuting their treaties, "unless impelled to do so by fear of naval guns."*

In combating the fallacy, that the introduction of legitimate commerce alone would expel the Slave-Trade from Africa, Lord Palmerston, during the recent debate on this question in the House of Commons, stated—"I regret to say that all the reports we get from time to time lead me to the opposite conclusion; namely, that legitimate commerce cannot live in competition with the Slave Trade; that wherever the Slave Trade flourishes legitimate commerce must be destroyed; and that therefore it is only by putting an end to the Slave Trade that we can hope to plant legitimate commerce on the shores of Africa." * * * "If this system of prevention of the Slave Trade were given up, I should like to know what would become of those legitimate traders, and those casks of palm-oil, ivory, and other products of the country. I mean to say they would be driven off the coast altogether: the whole coast of Africa would swarm with slave traders and pirates of every description."†

This view is sustained by a remarkable memorial, which was sent, in the year 1845, by the British residents at Badagry, on the Slave Coast, to a ship of war and the British Governor at Cape Coast, in which they describe the imminent danger to which they were exposed from the sanguinary violence of one of the chiefs, who wished to re-establish the Slave-Trade, and was waging war against the peaceable chiefs engaged in legitimate commerce.

The following are extracts from the document, a copy of which was forwarded to the Church Missio-

* Captain Trotter, R.N. Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 7.

† Report in the Times of Feb. 23, 1848.

nary Society in 1845; and it was made the subject of a communication with the Foreign Office.

* * * "In consequence of circumstances which have recently transpired around us, and of the peculiar and critical position in which we are thereby placed, we (the subjects of Her Britannic Majesty, whose names are hereto appended) deem it of the utmost importance that you should be made acquainted with our case and the state of things here. And perhaps it will be well for us first to give you some information relative to the persons who have taken the most prominent part in the proceedings which we now report." * * *

Here follows a detailed recital of the sanguinary proceedings of the hostile chief, Kossokkoh, against the chiefs who sided with the English; after which it proceeds to state:—

"Hundreds have fallen in the conflict: men, women, and children were murdered indiscriminately, and the streets are represented as being full of dead bodies.

"Information of this disastrous victory reached us two days ago, when it struck a panic through the whole town. But one opinion now exists amongst all parties, which is, that now the haughty chief has accomplished his first and greatest object, he will not close hostilities until he has conquered the whole line of coast to Whydah. This is evidently his desire and intention. Nothing less than the entire extirpation of the English, wherever he is capable of exerting his power, will satisfy him." * * *

"And now, having made you acquainted with the leading features of our position, and the grounds of our fearful apprehensions, we unitedly beg that you will visit us as soon as possible. We need your help, and we need it immediately."

We now proceed to state the various Missionary agencies which, under the protection of our cruisers, are exerting a moral influence on the condition of the West-African nations. Beginning at the north, the first Protestant Christian Mission is situated on the River Gambia, in about 15° north latitude, where the Wesleyan Missionary Society has some Stations, as also at a British Settlement, named Macarthy's Island, about 200 miles in the interior of that district. The next Christian Missions are those of the Church Missionary and the Wesleyan Missionary Societies at the British Colony of Sierra Leone, in about 8° 30′ north latitude. There is also a Church-of-England Mission at Port Lokkoh, in the Timmanee Country, about 60 miles in the interior from Sierra Leone. Pursuing our course southward, we arrive at the American Settlement of Liberia, extending along a line of coast of about 300 miles; between the fourth and sixth degrees of north latitude, where Missionaries from the American Episcopal Church, the American Methodists, and the American Baptists, are labouring among the emancipated Negroes imported from the United States.

On the Gold Coast, Missionaries from the Wesleyan Missionary and the Bâsle Missionary Societies are labouring on the sea-coast; and further in the interior the Wesleyans have a Missionary Station in the dominions of the powerful King of Ashantee. A few hundred miles eastward we find again some Missionaries of the Church Missionary and Wesleyan Missionary Societies at Badagry on the Slave Coast; and about sixty miles northward of Badagry, in the interior, there is a Mission of the Church Missionary Society, at Abbeokouta. Passing by the mouths of the Niger, we arrive at the island of Fernando Po, at which, and on the neighbouring mainland, the English Baptists

have commenced a Mission. Further southward, a few miles north of the Equator, there is a Mission of the American Board of Foreign Missions and of the North German Missionary Society at the River Gaboon, a French Settlement. Thus, over a line of coast extending about 1600 miles in length, there are Agents from nine different Missionary Societies engaged in imparting Christian instruction to the native tribes, under the protection which the presence of the cruisers ensures.

The extent of Missionary Agencies will be seen in the annexed Tabular View of the Missions of the different Societies. In the list of Native Teachers are included only those who are supported by the respective Societies.

STATIONS.	Ordained Missionaries.	European Teachers.	Native Teachers.	Communicants.	Schools.	Scholars.
CHURCH MISSIONARY SOC.						
Freetown } Fourah Bay }	4	2	6	142	8	961
River District	3	1	21	694	22	2563
Mountain District	3	—	14	807	21	1595
Sea District	1	1	7	230	8	459
Timmanee Mission	1	—	2	3	2	36
Badagry	3	—	1	18	2	63
Abbeokouta	2	—	2	31	2	77
Totals	17	4	53	1925	65	5754
WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOC.						
River Gambia, &c.	3	1	4	142	3	264
Macarthy's Island	1	—	3	150	2	90
Sierra Leone	6	—	42	3632	23	2717
Cape Coast Town	3	—	23	443	9	366
Domonasi and Anamabu	2	—	27	291	13	426
Accra	1	—	21	168	4	314
Ashantee	2	—	2	37	1	3
Badagry, &c.	2	—	7	24	2	55
Totals	20	1	129	4887*	57	4235
ENGLISH BAPT. MISS. SOC.						
Fernando Po	1	1	2	89	2	100
Bimlia	3	—	2	25	1	50
Cameroons	1	—	2	—	1	50
Totals	5	1	6	114	4	200
AMERICAN EPISC. MISSION.						
Liberia	6	—	5	30	—	144
AMERICAN BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.						
Gaboon River	1	1	5	No returns.		—
AMER. METHODIST MISS. SOC.						
Liberia	No returns.					
AMER. BAPT. MISS. SOC.						
Liberia	3	—	1	—	1	85
BASLE, OR SOUTH-GERMAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.						
Gold Coast	3	No returns.		—	1	53
NORTH GERMAN MISS. SOC.						
Gaboon River	No returns.					

* There are no returns of Communicants in connexion with the Wesleyan Missions. The numbers given are of those who have obtained tickets for admission to the Classes for private Religious instruction.

It will be impossible to do more in these pages than incidentally to notice the moral results which have already been effected by the system of Missionary Agency which has been described. According to the testimony given by the Rev. Mr. Fox to Dr. Madden, Her Majesty's Commissioner, in 1841, it appears, that at that period of the Mission at the Gambia there were 634 Natives professing the Christian Religion; that the success of Missionary enterprise there was generally attended by a corresponding improvement in the industrious habits and domestic relations of the Native Christians; that there were some very striking cases in which the converts manifested their zeal in communicating the knowledge of the truth to those of their brethren still in darkness; and that the Missionaries were received favourably by several of the native chiefs.*

On the Gold Coast we find similar results springing up from a similar agency. Want of space prevents the insertion of more than a passing allusion to the rapid growth of the Mission, and its perceptible effects on the native tribes. At a Meeting of British merchants at Cape Coast on March 4th, 1841, to consider a recent proclamation of Sir John Jeremie, the following incidental testimony is borne to this fact:—"The country is at present in a state of profound tranquillity, and beginning, in some measure, to feel the benefits of civilization by means of the influence of the local Government, the Christian efforts of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and the extension of legitimate commerce."†

Rev. John Beacham, the Secretary of the Wesleyan

* West-African Commissioner's Report in 1841, pp. 218—220 of Appendix to Report from Select Committee of House of Commons.

† Ibid. p. 137.

Missionary Society, states, in illustration of the civilization which is growing up among the natives in the vicinity of their Missions on the Gold Coast—"There is a taste induced for the decencies and comforts of civilized life to a great extent: several of the Christian Natives now use the English costume, and endeavour to get furniture for their houses somewhat in the English style."*

Our brief notice of Missionary exertions on the Gold Coast cannot be better closed than by the decisive testimony on this point contained in the Report of the Special Committee of the House of Commons on Western Africa in 1842.

"We would here acknowledge the great services rendered to religion and civilization on this coast by the Wesleyan body: they have even established a friendly communication with the barbarous Court of Ashantee, which promises results important in every way; and, indeed, little in the way of religious instruction would have been done without them."†

The various detailed Reports of the American Missionary Societies engaged on the West-African coast are not sufficiently accessible to the English reader to enable me to collect particular information respecting their proceedings and success in Liberia and in the Gaboon. I cannot, however, refrain from inserting a passage contained in the "Journal of an African Cruiser," by an officer of the United States' navy, illustrative of the silent influence and beneficial labours of a female American Missionary in a retired post on the shore of Liberia.

* Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, p. 193. Answer 3645.

† Report from Select Committee of House of Commons on West Coast of Africa in 1842, p. vii.

"*March* 29, 1844—Mrs. Sawyer was on board yesterday. It is not without regret that we part with this interesting, energetic, and truly Christian woman. She is the only white person here, and lives alone among a tribe of savages, as safe, and perhaps more so, than in a civilized city. The occasional visits of vessels of war prevent any evil-minded person from molesting her; but she has little need of guardianship of this nature, for her own kind acts and purity of character will always ensure her the respect of the natives. Mrs. Sawyer told us, that before her husband died, the war-king of the Settra Kroos had quarrelled with him, and was his enemy at the time of his death. Not long afterwards, this war-king came to Mrs. Sawyer, and assured her of his protection and assistance to the utmost of his power, which is very great, as he commands all the fighting-men of the tribe. I know not that the power of feminine excellence has ever been more strikingly acknowledged than by this act of an incensed and barbarous warrior."

The labours, also, of the English Baptist and the Bâsle Missionary Societies are either of recent origin, or are conducted on a small scale. There is no reason for believing that a proportionate measure of beneficial effects has not resulted, also, from the praiseworthy exertions of these various institutions.

But the necessary limits of these pages compel me to pass at once to the principal scene of Missionary labours in West Africa, and to dwell at length on the proofs of the progressive influence of Christian civilization on the British colony of Sierra Leone, and the other Missionary stations which have grown out as offshoots from this parent settlement.

The British colony of Sierra Leone had its origin,

not in any schemes of national aggrandizement, but in the pure, unmixed impulses of Christian benevolence. Without expressing any opinion on the original eligibility of this locality as the base of operations for the annihilation of the slave traffic and the civilization of Africa, it may nevertheless be asserted, at the present time, that the course of recent events, not only in Sierra Leone, but in other parts of the coast of Western Africa, suggests the belief, that "the great hope of evangelizing and civilizing Africa rests at the present moment on Sierra Leone." *

As early as the year 1787 an attempt was made by a number of British philanthropists to form a settlement of American refugee Negroes, who were then living in a state of destitution in London. In that year 470 Negroes were removed to the settlement; and in 1790 an addition was made to their number by 1196 Negroes from Nova Scotia, who were unable to bear the rigorous severity of that latitude. About the same time the Company which has been alluded to sent out also a few European settlers. In the year 1800, 550 Maroons were landed from Jamaica; and in 1818, 1222 pensioners from a disbanded black regiment in the West Indies were located, with their families, in the colony. In the year 1819, 85 Negroes, concerned in an insurrection in Barbadoes, were transported to Sierra Leone.

Since the abolition of the Slave Trade in 1807, the population has been continually increased by the location of the liberated slaves from the vessels captured by the British cruisers.

The disadvantageous circumstances of such a colony,

* D. Coates, Esq. Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, p. 397. Answer 6506.

the mixed races which compose its inhabitants, the constant influx of barbarism from the slave-holds, the uninterrupted infusion of new elements of social disorganization, the serious inequality of the sexes, the insalubrity of the climate, and the frequent changes of policy which have marked the administration of numerous successive Governors, have combined in checking the increase of its population, and in accumulating a variety of retarding influences to its growth in civilization. But with all these obstacles, it will be seen that the efforts of voluntary Societies, unaided by Government, have succeeded, by patient perseverance in a system of Christian instruction, in imparting the blessings of Christianity to considerable numbers of the native population of Sierra Leone, in effecting the social amelioration of the inhabitants, in raising the African mind, and in forming the nucleus of a native agency for disseminating the truths of Christianity into important Missionary openings on the coast of Africa.

The Church Missionary Society was the first Institution which established a Mission in Western Africa. In the year 1804 they sent Missionaries to the vicinity of Sierra Leone; but after a few years of labour among the Soosoo and Bullom tribes, they were compelled, by the difficulties caused by the slave dealer, and the jealousy instilled among the native princes, to withdraw their establishment, and to consolidate their Mission in the British territory of Sierra Leone. The Wesleyan Missionary Society entered on this Missionary station a few years later; and both Societies have been gradually extending their operations until the present time.

The description of Missionary operations at Sierra Leone will be principally confined to those of the Church Missionary Society.

The decided progress which has been made, in spite of the powerful obstacles to the moral improvement of the people, may be best gathered from the following extract from Mr. Coates's evidence*, and from the Report of the Parliamentary Committee.

In 1842 Mr. Coates was able to state—"With a coloured population in Sierra Leone of little more than 40,000, by the census of 1840, to have about 6000 of those under regular instruction in Schools, 6000 additional attending Public Worship, and about 1400† regular Communicants, with 40 Native Teachers (that is, Africans who have been taught to become teachers of others in the Colony); these facts, I apprehend, afford very decisive proof as to the progress and efficiency of the Mission."

The Report of the Parliamentary Committee‡ bears equally unequivocal testimony.

"To that (*i. e.* the British) Government, beyond his rescue from the slave ship, and emancipation from future slavery, and a temporary sustenance, and his being placed within the reach of Missionary efforts, to which it has not contributed, the Liberated African cannot fairly be said to owe much. To the invaluable exertions of the Church Missionary Society more especially, and also to a considerable extent, as in all our African Settlements, to the Wesleyan body, the highest praise is due. The former expend nearly 7000*l.*, the latter nearly 2000*l.*, annually upon the religious instruction of the Colony. By their efforts nearly one-fifth of the whole population—a most un-

* Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, p. 395. Answer, 6484.

† The Communicants amount at the present time to 1925.

‡ Report from Select Committee of House of Commons on West Coast of Africa in 1842, p. xiv.

usually high proportion in any country—are at School; and the effects are visible in considerable intellectual, moral, and religious improvement—very considerable under the peculiar circumstances of such a Colony."

The character and value of the religious impression made by Missionary exertion on the native population will be best appreciated by observing its influence,

1. In raising the social condition of the Africans.

2. In developing the mental capacity of the Negro race.

3. In calling into existence important channels for the dissemination of Christian truth in the interior of Africa.

The agents of the Church Missionary Society are spread over the colony, among the villages as well as in the capital, Freetown. The Missionaries have to contend with peculiarly unfavourable influences in the latter place from the numbers of European crews, who help to spread, by their example and influence, the melancholy catalogue of European demoralization among the population. Hence it has generally been found, that the most decided progress of Christian civilization has been made in the surrounding villages, which extend nearly thirty miles through the peninsula of Sierra Leone. These localities are more remote from the counteracting influences of European immorality which have been alluded to, and also, at the same time, further removed from the observation of those foreigners who sometimes take a hasty and unfavourable view of Missionary results from the mixed population of Freetown.

1. Lest our statements should be suspected as coming from partial witnesses, it will be necessary to give, in the first place, the testimony of witnesses un-

connected with the Mission, but possessing fair opportunities of judging of this part of our subject.

Logan Hook, Esq., in the course of his examination before the Parliamentary Committee, stated, in reference to the social state of the community of Sierra Leone, as compared with other settlements—"As far as the outward signs of morality are concerned, I do not suppose there is a colony under the British Crown where more decency is observed, especially on the Sunday."*

A former Governor of Sierra Leone, Colonel H. D. Campbell, was asked the following question by the same Committee, and returned an equally decisive reply:—"Did you observe that the religious or moral instruction among the adults was attended with any important effects?"—"I think certainly that it was. In some of the Missionary villages on the Sunday it was beautiful to see the adults come into the Schools and receive instruction; to see a man of sixty receiving instruction from a little child."†

And here we are led to digress a little from the proposed course of our subject, by the assertion of a recent writer in the Quarterly Review, that this witness, who gives so decisive a testimony to the beneficial effects of Missionary instruction, nevertheless "describes a social state which we (*i. e.* the Reviewer) believe has not been equalled by that of any other tropical colony in the worst days of slavery!"

Undoubtedly Colonel Campbell describes several effects of former mismanagement, as seen in the abuses

* Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, p. 542. Answer 8551.

† Ibid. p. 556. Answer 8809.

of the apprenticeship system, the mal-administration of the Liberated-African department, and the social inconveniences of constant new importations of barbarism. The wonder, however, is, that, in spite of such counteracting moral influences, he was able to give so good an account of the African population in the colony. The witness was appointed Governor in February 1835, and during less than two years of office he suspended various local officers; and on an appeal against his proceedings being forwarded to the Colonial Office, he was soon himself recalled in January 1837 by the Home Government. The personal feeling which seems to pervade his evidence may unconsciously have betrayed the witness into extreme statements. In the very first page he accuses the Colonial Chaplain, a highly respectable Clergyman now in this country, of total ignorance on the state of religion and education. On his arrival in the colony he found the public departments in a state of confusion. He complains of Lord Glenelg not having confirmed his nomination of a local officer. He complains of Her Majesty's Commissioner having "highly extolled" a more recent Governor, Sir John Jeremie, after a few months' administration of the local government, "whereas his own name is never mentioned."

In spite of the evil example of Europeans living in open concubinage, of the profligacy of European sailors, of the disadvantages of new imports of barbarism, and of the asserted previous mal-administration of the local Government, yet the evidence of Colonel Campbell contains ample proof that the native population, at least in the villages, were generally a temperate, an honest, a docile, a tractable, a benevolent, and a religious class of people. "In some of the vil-

lages there was no such thing as a grog-shop."* "Their honesty and sobriety, taking them as a body, is extraordinary."† Their "kind feeling and charity" towards their own newly-liberated countrymen "certainly exceeds any thing I ever witnessed."‡ He "thinks certainly," that "the religious and moral instruction among the adults was attended with important results." He mentions the "beautiful" sight "in some of the Missionary villages on the Sunday," to which allusion has been already made.§ And we assert that the natural inference from all those concessions is this—Either the witness has been marvellously inconsistent with himself,—or the Quarterly Reviewer has quoted his evidence unfairly, and departed very far from the truth, when he asserts that Colonel Campbell "describes a social state which we believe has not been equalled by that of any other tropical colony in the worst days of slavery."

We need not feel surprise if the physical wretchedness and moral degradation of savages, just let loose from the slave-hold, should impress unfavourably the mind of a person newly arrived in the colony, or taking his views from the population of Freetown. But that the Quarterly Reviewer's statements are not a true description of the general character of the native population will be further proved from the details of evidence to which we shall next proceed.

The reflex benefits of religious instruction on the social condition and temporal welfare of the people

* Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, p. 568. Answer 8974.

† Ibid. p. 606. Answer 9333.

‡ Ibid. p. 557. Answer 8825.

§ Ibid. p. 556. Answer 8809.

may be stated in the words of an eye-witness*, already quoted, who, in his official situation as Collector of Customs, must have possessed good opportunities of knowing the truth of the facts.

After speaking of the number of Africans who, by successful commerce as shopkeepers and traders, had become persons of property, and owners of vessels, he was examined as follows :—

Q. "How many do you suppose there are who have capital to the amount of £500, for example?"

A. "There are a great many who could muster that: I know several of them to be men of wealth, of very respectable property, and their houses well furnished."

Q. "If you were called upon to guess the number, what would you say?"

A. "I should say that there could not be less than fifty of those people worth 500*l.*; but many of them are worth small sums: hundreds of them are men of small independence in their way. I know some of them that I have reason to believe could muster 3000*l.* or 4000*l.* in hard cash alone."

Q. "Such men as you describe are probably men of some degree of intelligence?"

A. "They are."

Q. "Are they competent, do you conceive, to take part in the functions of civil life, such as acting on juries, and taking part in the administration of affairs?"

A. "I have considerable experience in witnessing their conduct† as jurymen, for a series of years; and

* Logan Hook, Esq. Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, p 529. Answers 8333—8336.

† The witness for many years filled the office of Police Magistrate at Sierra Leone.

the impression left upon my mind is very much in their favour. I consider them intelligent, impartial, just, and generally very correct in their decisions and verdicts. I have never had reason to doubt a black jury of liberated Africans: I wish I could say as much for other juries that are not liberated Africans."

A striking fact, illustrative of the improved moral and social condition of a population exposed to influences of so peculiarly unfavourable a tendency as have been before described, and so calculated to counteract the legitimate benefits of Missionary instruction, is contained in the Report of Her Majesty's Commissioner, Dr. Madden, in 1841:—"There has been no capital punishment here for many years, and it is greatly to be hoped there never may be one in this colony, or any other of our West-African settlements."* Governor Doherty also states, in 1841, that whereas, in 1819, the gaol at Sierra Leone contained 706 prisoners, at the latter date the number was diminished to 111, debtors inclusive, notwithstanding the increase of the population.†

We shall make a few other extracts from the report of Dr. Madden, at the same time begging the reader to mark his concessions as to the favourable condition of the native population; the more especially as, by Dr. Madden's own confession, he never visited the villages of Sierra Leone, where alone the beneficial influences of Missionary instruction receive a fair experiment; and because, also, his views of the value of the colony are quoted, by the Quarterly Reviewer, in depreciation of our West-African Missions.

"I was forcibly struck with the largeness of the

* West-African Commissioner's Report, p. 248 of Appendix to Report from Select Committee of House of Commons.

† Appendix to Report, p. 363.

scale on which the public buildings were constructed, the wideness of the streets, and the regularity of their lanes; the number of stone houses, and the excellence of the roads; the abundance in the markets; the multitude of well-dressed Negroes in these places; the variety of stalls and shops in their own quarter, well supplied with British goods; the cleanliness and the comfortableness of their small abodes; the size and structure of the principal church, and the numerous chapels and schools in the town and suburbs; and, though last not least, the admirable order that seemed to prevail amongst the negro population, without any apparent exercise of magisterial rigour, or severity of political restraint to repress or to control the people."* * * * * * *

"With regard to the administration of justice in the colony during my short residence there, nothing came to my knowledge but what was favourable to its character. The Government is mild, lenient, and in no respect oppressive to the people. This is the only colony where the Negro seems to feel he is a free man, and knows his rights, and respects his neighbour's; and so far as decency in dress, decorum in the streets, and general goodness of behaviour in public, I have certainly seen nothing elsewhere, either in the Spanish or British colonies in the West Indies, to be compared with them in this respect."†

After these testimonies we may fairly claim credit for the statements of Missionaries engaged in the benevolent work of evangelizing the natives. We only cite their evidence on one point.

The extent to which the Christian Sabbath is ob-

* West-African Commissioner's Report in 1841, p. 244 of Appendix to Report from Select Committee of House of Commons.

† Ibid. p. 252.

served and hallowed by the people is an important test of the reality and value of the social improvement effected by Christianity.

John Attarra, one of the oldest Native Catechists in the colony in connexion with the Church Missionary Society, thus expresses himself on this subject in a Letter to one of the Secretaries:—

"If you were to have a sight of our Congregations on the Lord's-day, the Sunday Scholars, Communicants, and Candidates, Sir, you would be indeed constrained to say, as the Queen of Sheba said when she had a sight of King Solomon's palace, and saw the manner of his kingdom, and exclaimed, that not the half of what she saw was told to her in her own land. And thus so would you say, were you to be an eye-witness of what the Lord is carrying on by His servants in this colony."*

The Rev. J. U. Graf, speaking of his station, Hastings, observes, September 7, 1845, in reference to the regularity with which Public Worship is attended, and the devotional behaviour of those who assemble in the House of God—"One circumstance which cheers me is the evident pleasure which the people seem to take in the means of grace. During the past quarter we have had Divine Service during such heavy rains that we thought it impossible for more than a few persons to attend; but on proceeding to Church a steady and attentive Congregation has been found waiting."

About the same time the Rev. N. Denton, in reference to Regent, writes—"The attendance on the means of grace is truly encouraging. On the Lord's-day Morning the Church, which is estimated to hold 900, is not sufficiently large to receive all who come, so that many sit around the windows and doors."

* 46th Annual Report of Church Missionary Society, p. 43.

The various testimonies which have been adduced will naturally lead every candid reader to the inquiry, whether a colony, of which so much can be said, can be so useless an appendage to the British empire, so fruitless a scene of Missionary enterprise, and so hopeless a centre for the future diffusion of Christian civilization through the interior of the benighted continent of Africa, as some have ventured to affirm.

We may sum up in the words of Col. Doherty, who succeeded Col. Campbell in the government of Sierra Leone, contained in a Letter to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated Oct. 27th, 1841:—

"If, on the barbarous coast of Africa, a colony and town, such as are here described, have been planted and are maintained; and if, within them, a portion of the savage tribes of that continent, after being debased by African servitude, and only just rescued from foreign slavery, form a community so well-ordered, so intelligent, so happy, so sensible of their advantages as freemen and as Christians, and therefore so well prepared to avail themselves of them; whilst all this has been accomplished, not by severity and terror, but unoppressively, with leniency, with mildness, and by no greater coercion than what arises from the regular and silent operation of the laws; then surely it seems not very consistent to declare, that the management which has assisted towards such results has been a bad or even an indifferent management, any more than it would be reasonable to affirm, that the lives and treasure which have, at the same time, been expended in producing them, have been expended without benefit to the cause of humanity."*

Before we advance to the next point of our subject

* Appendix to Report from Select Committee of House of Commons on West Coast of Africa, p. 369.

we must again revert for a moment to some of the statements of the Quarterly Reviewer. He states that the "Mahomedan Missionaries were making such numerous proselytes that the white Christians thought fit to check the progress of that persuasion by destroying their mosques;" as if, forsooth, the Missionaries were trembling for the existence of their Missions, and were compelled to employ the secular power in repelling the inroads of Islamism on their flocks.

The true version of the matter is simply this:—Many of the West-African tribes are Mahomedans, and consequently it is not surprising that many of that persuasion should have found their way to Sierra Leone, nor that many of the poor ignorant savages who are brought thither from the captured slavers should exchange the fetish superstitions of their native districts for a system of religious falsehood, which deals liberally in the charms and incantations so intimately connected in their minds with every thing supernatural.

The rites and superstitions of the Mahomedans in Sierra Leone were of so anti-social a tendency, and were so calculated to subvert the benevolent objects for which the colony was originated, that the then Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, Lord John Russell—never known as an enemy either to civil or religious liberty—authorized the Governor of Sierra Leone, Col. Doherty, to effect the removal of the Mahomedan mosques to a more distant part of the colony.*

* See copy of a Report from Governor Doherty, dated October 27, 1841, and a Despatch, dated December 4, 1839, in Appendix to Report from Select Committee of House of Commons on West Coast of Africa, pp. 362, 369, 370. We are credibly informed that this measure was not carried out, though, by a mistake on the part of the police, one mosque was previously removed from its site on the crown lands.

2. A second test of the value of Missionary exertions at Sierra Leone may be seen in the *developement of the mental capacity of the Negro race.*

It will have been already seen that a very unusually large proportion of the population, even according to a European standard, are receiving instruction in the Missionary Schools. That such instruction has succeeded in raising the native mind may be inferred from the general desire on the part of parents to obtain and appreciate the benefits of education for their children. The testimony of Mr. J. Miller in 1841, the Government Inspector of Schools in the colony, will be appropriate on this point.

"The great and flattering success in the Missionary Schools of the system of levying small wages on the parents of the pupils has been mentioned, and is in accordance with all experience on the subject in other countries. Education, like other objects of attainment, is not to be duly valued, especially by those who are unable to apprehend its ultimate uses, until it has the price of money put upon it, until some sacrifice is made to obtain it, and the party making this sacrifice thereby acquires, as it were, a property in it."*

That the progress of education, and the raising of the African mind, are among the visible fruits of the Sierra-Leone Missions is strikingly shown, at a more recent period, in the following Despatch from the late lamented Governor of Sierra Leone, Dr. Fergusson, to Her Majesty's Government at home. It is dated May 18th, 1845, and was transmitted to the Church Missionary Society by Lord Stanley.

"There has been an increase, in the total number of

* Appendix to Report from Select Committee of House of *Commons on West Coast* of Africa, p. 390.

children educated in the schools of the colony, of 1528 scholars over the number of last year. The cause of education has assuredly borne its full share in the generally progressive advancement of the colony. The progress has not, however, been confined to mere numerical increase. Along with that, measures have also been adopted for affording to the children of the colony that which the progressive prosperity of its people has now made a desideratum, viz. an educational course of a higher character than that which merely qualifies for the labourer and the tradesman, wherein the principle of either total or partial charity is to be abandoned. Boarding-schools, for the education of children of both sexes, have been established, under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society, and, so far, the scheme promises well. It will, at no remote date, be the means of establishing a new, most important, and influential grade in the society of Sierra Leone; among which the husbands, the wives, and the domestic intercourse of the middle classes of England will, for the first time, find representatives in Western Africa. It may be taken as neither an unfair nor unfavourable criterion of the position in the social scale at which the people have arrived, that these establishments are at length acknowledged to have become necessary; and that the pecuniary means of many of the more industrious and successful of the people are now such as to enable them to avail themselves of the advantages which they afford."*

Another interesting proof of the general intellectual advancement of the natives brought within the sphere of Missionary influence may be taken from the character of the course of education imparted to African youths in the Church Missionary Society's Christian

* Church Missionary Annual Report for 1846, p. 41.

Institution in Fourah Bay, and at their Grammar School at Freetown.

The Fourah-Bay Institution aims at a higher order of education, for the purpose of raising a body of duly-qualified Native Teachers. In the Grammar School an education of a more preparatory kind is imparted to about forty-five native youths. The course of education pursued in the latter establishment cannot be better stated than in the following Report of an examination of the pupils, sent by Rev. T. Peyton, the Principal, to the Church Missionary Society, during the past year:—

"On the 29th of June (1847), a *vivâ voce* examination took place, the students having been examined during the previous three days in writing. The second and third classes were examined in English History—from the reign of Queen Anne to the present reign—the geography of Africa and America, Bible History, and English Grammar. Their copy-books, and the maps of the first-class, were then opened for inspection. The second Greek class was then examined in nineteen pages of Valpy's Delectus and the Grammar. The first division was also examined in the following subjects by his Honour the acting Chief Justice:—in Greek, Xenophon's Anabasis; in Latin, part of the First Book of Cæsar's Commentaries; and sixty-four pages of Grecian History. Two pupils then recited two pieces in Latin and Greek prose, and another in English. Time would not allow for their examination in English History and Nicholl's Help to the Bible. In the former they had got up the reigns of George II. and George III., and of the latter sixty-two pages. The first Greek class is pursuing Xenophon's Anabasis; the second, the Analecta Minora.

"The gentlemen who were present expressed their

entire satisfaction with the proceedings of the day, and said that the examination was highly creditable to the School, and far exceeded their expectations. The first and second classes have now gone through a complete course of English history, from the invasion of Julius Cæsar to the present reign."*

The youths educated in this Seminary are fitted, subsequently, to fill situations under Government and in merchants' offices; or, if they evince decided proofs of Christian piety and mental power, are transferred to the Fourah-Bay Institution, to receive the more deep and solid training for the work of the Christian Ministry, or for becoming Catechists, Schoolmasters, and Teachers of their fellow-countrymen. One Negro youth, named Samuel Crowther, a native of the Yoruba Nation, and many years ago rescued by a British cruiser from the hold of a slave ship, had been for some time engaged as an effective Catechist, and more recently was invited by the Church Missionary Committee to come to England, where, after a few months' additional preparation in the Society's College at Islington, he was admitted to Deacons' and Priests' Orders by the Bishop of London in 1843.

The Committee expect, in the course of the present year, two African candidates for holy orders to arrive in England, in addition to one now in the Society's Institution at Islington.

3. A third illustration of the value of the Sierra-Leone Missions may be seen in their *calling into existence important channels for the dissemination of Christian truth in the interior of Africa.*

It is one of the most marvellous dispensations of

* Church Missionary Record for Feb. & March 1848, pp. 25, 26.

Divine Providence that the Slave Trade, which has inundated with an overwhelming tide of suffering this benighted continent, should be overruled by the hand of Omnipotence, and be made to flow back again into the interior of Africa in the diffusion of the blessings of civilization and Christianity through that parched desert of moral desolation. Under the present system of preventive cruisers, natives from between thirty and forty different tribes, and speaking as many languages and dialects of the interior, are brought together at Sierra Leone, under the instruction of the Missionaries, and form the nucleus of a body of native evangelists and translators for the spiritual emancipation of their fatherland. The most superficial reader of the replies of the Missionaries to Her Majesty's Commissioner, at our various West-African settlements, cannot fail to be struck with their uniform testimony to the generally-perceptible zeal of the native converts in endeavours to impart the knowledge of the Christian Religion to their fellow-countrymen who still remain in heathen darkness. The existence of this feeling among the Christian Africans, and the anxious desire of many of them to return to their native districts, invest with an unspeakable importance the system of raising up a Native Missionary agency at Sierra Leone; which, with the Divine blessing on the means now in the course of adoption, may yet prove a focus of light for transmitting the influence of Christian civilization over the interior of the African continent.

A Mission was commenced in 1839 at Port Lokkoh, in the Timmanee Country, about 60 miles from Sierra Leone, on the road to Timbo and Timbuctoo.

In the year 1842 measures were adopted, which have since led to the planting of a still more im-

portant off-shoot from the parent Mission of Sierra Leone. A large proportion of the liberated African population of Sierra Leone are natives of the Yoruba Country, commonly called Akoos. This people partake very strongly of the ardent attachment of Africans to their fatherland. Considerable numbers of them had lately emigrated to Badagry, in the Bight of Benin, which place is situated between Whydah and Lagos, the principal slave-dealing haunts of those parts, and is the most convenient point for entering the Yoruba Country. Many of these Akoos were Communicants of the Church Missionary Society and the Wesleyan Missionary Society's Missions at Sierra Leone, and carried with them the knowledge of Christianity. A desire was expressed to the members of both Missions, by the Native Christians under their respective care, to obtain the continued privilege of religious instruction when they proceeded as emigrants to Badagry.

In reference to the belief that the emigrants to Badagry had been again kidnapped there, Colonel Doherty observes in 1841, respecting a passage in Dr. Madden's report—

"In speaking of emigration from Sierra Leone, Dr. Madden notices the case of one of those parties of liberated Africans who returned from the colony to Badagry, and conjectures that many of them fell back there into slavery. Before I left Sierra Leone, however, two letters were produced to me, purporting to be written from Badagry by individuals of that party, which gave a different account; and I now perceive, in the publication called the 'Friend of Africa,' a further communication from another of them, by name William Fergusson (whose person I perfectly recollect), which is dated at Badagry on the 2d of March, and from which it would appear that they could not

have met the fate Dr. Madden apprehends, but must have been successful in the objects of their voyage."*

The first Missionary, Mr. Townsend, sailed on the 14th of November 1842, in a ship called the "Wilberforce," belonging to a Native Communicant at Freetown. The greatest interest was felt by the native population throughout the colony in Mr. Townsend's undertaking; and as he passed along the streets he was greeted with fervent blessings from many an African tongue and heart. "The people of Hastings raised an additional subscription among themselves, to pay the passage of one of their own number—a Native Christian Visitor—to accompany Mr. Townsend; and the owner of the 'Wilberforce,' with a generosity worthy of more general imitation among the more enlightened and wealthier ship-owners of England, granted Mr. Townsend a passage free of expense." †

According to the latest accounts, the chiefs, both at Badagry and Abbeokouta, have assigned ground for the erection of dwelling-houses and churches. At Abbeokouta the chiefs gave the newly-arrived Missionaries a most cordial welcome, and are in the habit of attending the Missionary Services, the Mission Church being built on a portion of the ground attached to the residence of the principal chief. One of the first incidents which happened after their arrival was the unexpected discovery, by the Rev. Samuel Crowther—the Negro Clergyman to whom reference has been made, and who is a native of this district—of his aged mother and sister, from whom he had been separated for up-

* Appendix to Report from Select Committee of House of Commons on West Coast of Africa, p. 367. Colonel Doherty also, in other portions, shows the incorrectness of the assertions respecting the kidnapping from Sierra Leone; see Appendix, p. 364.

† Church Missionary Annual Report for 1843, p. 43.

ward of twenty years, and whom he had never seen since the time when they were torn from each other, on their march from the place of their captivity in the interior, down to the slave vessel on the sea shore. With the assistance of his friends, Mr. Crowther succeeded in redeeming his two relatives from domestic slavery. They afterward became earnest inquirers after that religion, of which they beheld such a trophy in the person of their son and brother; and they have become members of a class of candidates for admission to Christian Baptism.

Frequent cases occurred, in which the people evinced their favourable impression of the superior benevolence of that religion and of that nation which had done so much in endeavouring to prevent the sale of their countrymen into slavery.

There are some very striking statements contained in this Native Clergyman's journal, of which extracts are occasionally forwarded to the Church Missionary Society, in illustration of the moral influence exercised by the Mission. An entry is contained in the Journal of May 27, 1846, giving a detailed description of the circumstances attending a recent message from the Missionaries at Badagry to the native chiefs at Abbeokouta, and of the scenes which occurred when their protection and permission to proceed to Abbeokouta was solicited on behalf of the Missionaries. The messengers, on their return, stated that their message was favourably received by the leading chiefs of Abbeokouta, and especially by Sagbua, the elder of Ake, the royal town. At the council of chiefs, Bada, the leading man in the cause of the Slave Trade, foreseeing the obstacles which the Missionaries and emigrants from Sierra Leone would throw in the way of the traffic, pleaded the cause of the foreign slave

dealers, whose agents were present to obstruct the arrival of the Missionaries. He spoke of the wealth of the former, the number of their ships in the roads of Porto Novo, their desire to open the Slave Trade with the people of Abbeokouta, at the same time alluding to the poverty of the Missionaries, and concluding this appeal to their avarice, by the present of ten pieces of cloth and eight demijohns of rum.

Mr. Crowther proceeds to remark in his Journal—

"When the council had broken up, Sagbua (the friendly chief before mentioned) called our messenger aside, and told him that he took no more notice of the contemptuous expression used by Bada against those white men at Badagry, than he took of the rags which he brought from Domingo (the slave factor) to entice them to deal with him in slaves. He said, 'Those very people who live in the boarded house, whom he called poor, are the people whom I want. It is through them our sons and daughters, who were stolen away from us, were liberated; and not only so, they have accompanied them back, without any payment from us, to this country.'"

And yet a recent West-African traveller, Mr. John Duncan, would fain lead us to believe that the Slave Trade is, to a considerable extent, carried on by these emigrants from Sierra Leone to Abbeokouta. After mentioning some rumoured case of an African emigrant being found on board a slaver, he proceeds to say, "I believe this is only one of many instances where emigrants from Sierra Leone to Abbeokouta, on being liberated from slavery themselves, have commenced the same abominable traffic!"*

The following notices of the notorious family of De

* Vol. I. p. 188.

Souza, the principal foreign slave factors on the coast, with whom Mr. Duncan appears to have been on terms of cordial friendship, may throw some light on the probable source of his information, and the value of the assertion:—

"The Spaniards and Portuguese of this place (Popoe, on the Slave Coast) all treated me with kindness. In fact, though they are slave dealers, they are generous and kind, and very gentlemanly in their manners, peculiarly to Englishmen. Even the greatest enemies of Mr. De Souza, if they knew him, would admit him to be such."

Mr. Duncan appears to have been on still more familiar terms with Mr. De Souza, sen., at Whydah, whom he calls "the generous old man," "my old friend," "*the most generous and humane man on the coast of Africa!*" and who would not accept any payment in return for the articles supplied to Mr. Duncan, "though they must have cost him about one hundred pounds." Even Mr. Duncan could not help feeling a *momentary* regret "that such a man should be coupled with traffic so abominable as that of buying and selling human beings."

These poor African emigrants from Sierra Leone are somewhat unfortunate. They were at first accused of being themselves re-sold into slavery. The charge is now varied, and they are accused of selling others into slavery!

Such, then, is the amount of good to the cause of civilization and humanity which has been accomplished under the present system of preventive cruisers. And with these facts before our eyes, can we for a moment suffer ourselves to be deluded into the belief that our efforts on behalf of Africa have resulted in total

failure; and that we may recede from the post of honour which humanity and justice have alike assigned to Britain?

Let it not be said that *the climate of West Africa presents physical barriers to the continuance of our efforts* in the cause of philanthropy, when no such arguments are admitted to check the career of British conquest and national aggrandizement. With the precautionary measures of temperance and moderation, the insalubrity of the climate will be greatly disarmed of its injurious effects. A naval commander* has testified, as the result of his experience during three years and a half on the station, that "the climate is very much abused: the squadron does not suffer more from the climate than it does from rum."† The returns, also, of the different Missionary Societies prove that European life is as well able to withstand the climate of West Africa as that of Hong Kong and some of the West-Indian Islands, and that the insalu-

* Captain Broadhead, R.N. Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, p. 139. Answer 2648.

† Since the greater part of these pages were written, Lord Aberdeen, according to a Report in the "Times," made the following statement during the recent debate on the Slave Trade in the House of Lords, on Tuesday, February 22d:—

"Undoubtedly, the climate and swamps on the coast of Africa are injurious to health and life; but, with due precaution, the climate on the coast of Africa is not at all more unhealthy than any other tropical climate. The return on your Lordships' table shows that *the loss of life has been exaggerated to a degree scarcely credible;* and if due precautions are taken, the amount of deaths occurring is not greater, as I have before stated, than might be expected in any other tropical climate. Taking the year 1847, if the last six months should prove not more fatal than the first six months (the returns for the latter period being the latest received), the loss of the squadron in the course of the year would be considerably less than two per cent."

brity of Sierra Leone has been considerably diminished during the last few years.

Nor, again, let us be deterred from a continuance of our national protest against the Slave Trade by the *pecuniary expenditure* which the presence of our cruising squadron involves. While the course of our Indian victories has been pursued at so costly an outlay of treasure, as well as of life; while the annual expenditure of Britain on her newly-acquired settlement in a rocky, barren, insalubrious island off the Chinese coast, almost useless for the purposes of commerce, amounts to nearly half-a-million sterling; while our Anglo-Indian Government reaps an annual revenue of two millions and a-half sterling from the monopoly of opium and the proceeds of a contraband traffic carried on along the shores of a weak and defenceless pagan empire; let not the comparatively inconsiderable pittance which supports our cruising squadron on the coast of Africa be grudged in the cause of pure and unmixed benevolence, and in mitigating the evils of suffering humanity.

Nor, again, let *the pretended arguments of philanthropy* seduce us to the belief that we are best subserving the cause of the African by leaving him to his fate, and by no longer producing, by our cruisers, a virtual augmentation of his sufferings.

Even if we were disposed to concede that the aggregate of African suffering has not been greatly diminished by the cruising system; even if statistical facts could be adduced to establish the assertion, that the horrors on the original seizure of the slaves—the cruelties on their march from the interior to the coast —the wholesale atrocities so often perpetrated at the barracoons—the tortures of the middle passage, and the reckless sacrifice of African life during the chase

of a slave ship by a cruiser—equal or exceed the aggregate of suffering which would take place in the event of the slave ship being able to export African labour without such hazard and check; yet we should recognise in that concession no shadow of reason, no ground of argument in favour of the withdrawal of our cruisers; but rather a proof in confirmation of the necessity of adopting a more decided tone toward those unprincipled States under whose flag the inhuman traffic is carried on. We in no degree forfeit our title to the character of sound humanity, even if we consent to produce a greater aggregate of present suffering, in the hope of the entire cessation of that suffering. Like the remedial pains of a surgical operation, we endure a greater present evil, in order to eradicate the vastest social and moral evil that ever afflicted mankind.*

Our last proposal was,

III. *To suggest those practical measures of a remedial kind which may render the present system of cruisers more effective for the speedy abolition of the African Slave Trade.*

1. The *first* practical measure of a remedial kind for removing the difficulties with which the cruisers now have to contend, and for rendering their success speedy and certain in the annihilation of the Slave Trade, is to pursue diplomatic negotiations with European Powers, declaring participation in the

* "I cannot admit that which seems to be the opinion adopted by most gentlemen who have spoken, namely, that the preventive means resorted to have aggravated the horrors of the Slave Trade. I know that this is the generally-received opinion, which passes from mouth to mouth, and which is adopted without due examination of the grounds on which it rests."—*Lord Palmerston's Speech in Slave Trade debate on February 22d*, 1848.

detestable traffic an act of piracy, and punishable as such; and the conclusion of treaties with native African princes, making it compulsory on them to abstain from dealing in slaves and supplying the European slave factors. The testimony of all the witnesses who alluded to this part of the question alike concurred in the important results which might be expected to follow the adoption of this measure. Capt. E. H. Butterfield, R.N., in the course of his examination before the Mixed British and French Commission, was asked—

"Do you conceive that any measures could be resorted to which would be effectual for putting down the Slave Trade?" to which he replied, "The most effectual would be, to declare it piracy by all nations." *

A French naval officer, M. Fleuriot de Langle, before the same Commissioners thus summed up his evidence and expressed the necessity of this measure:—

"If two great nations like France and England, moved by sentiments of humanity, were to digest together a Despatch (*une note*), by which all traffic with the slave markets was declared criminal, and if they were to invite the other great Powers to give their adherence to this Despatch, it would be possible, in virtue of this agreement, to declare in actual blockade those parts where the Slave Trade is carried on. The chiefs of these localities, in want of every article, would be led to subscribe treaties, by which they would engage to renounce this abominable traffic, and to deliver up to the cruisers the persons of those factors on whom the law of piracy would be applied.

* Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 11.

If the chiefs infringed these treaties, the cruisers would have the right to execute them by force of arms. * * * * *

"I affirmed that I had never met in the slave markets any but Spaniards, Portuguese, or Italians, and that the flag of Spain, Portugal, or Brazils, covered almost entirely the slavers. I have assigned the cause of this state of things especially to the impunity which the adventurers who engage in the hazards of this navigation meet before the Courts of Justice in their respective countries; therefore, I propose to consider them as out of the pale of the law, and to apply to them the law of piracy." *

The Honourable Captain Denman, R. N. †, also mentions, among other remedial measures for the increased effectiveness of the cruisers, the universal right of search of the vessels of every nation suspected of being employed in the traffic, the personal punishment of the parties who may be found engaged in it, the breaking up of the slave dépôts, and the formation of treaties with the Native Powers for the destruction of the slave factories.

The beneficial results of even a temporary adoption of the two last of the measures suggested by him could not be better exemplified than in the remarkable check, and the serious blow, given to the Cuban Slave Trade by his own decisive and energetic proceedings in the destruction of the barracoons at the Gallinas. It is to be regretted that the suspension of measures, already proved by experience to be so effectual, should have been the occasion of a partial and temporary revival of the Slave Trade in 1843 and

* Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, pp. 62, 63.

† Ibid. p. 31.

1844, on a scale beyond the estimated slave exports of 1842 and the two preceding years.*

Few difficulties exist to the formation of treaties with the native princes in whose dominions the Slave Trade is carried on, the whole traffic on the western coast being, at present, circumscribed to about ten points of the shore.† Diplomatic negotiations with European Powers are a work of greater difficulty; but the concessions which, up to the present time, have been extorted by the patient perseverance of the last twenty years encourage the hope, that, with the decrease of national jealousies, and the contemporaneous increase of international confidence, the petty feuds of political rivalry may be exchanged for a spirit of mutual emulation in extirpating this evil by the common efforts of Christendom. At all events, it is no longer to be tolerated that the supposed sanctity of any flag, hoisted from a slave ship, shall protect that vessel from the scrutiny consequent on reasonable suspicion, and be prostituted to the encouragement of robbery and bloodshed. Nor is it to be endured that the costly efforts of Britain in the suppression of the Slave Trade are to be defeated by the presumed exemption from personal punishment of the guilty agents in this wholesale system of crime. Let it once

* Although there was much in the recent trial, *Buron* v. *Denman*, which revealed the legal obstacles still supposed to exist, and which indicate the necessity of very decisive measures of diplomacy for checking the slave dealers of other nations; yet every friend of the African race will sincerely rejoice at the defeat of attempts, as audacious as they were disgraceful, to inflict injury and ruin on a naval commander who set so good an example of zeal in the cruising service, and whose efforts for the suppression of the Slave Trade were crowned with so large a measure of successful results.

† Le Baron Darrican. Evidence before British and French Commission in 1845, p. 58.

be understood that the crews of captured slave vessels would be treated as pirates if guilty of the destruction of human life during a chase, or in resistance to capture; and be punished as felons, by transportation to some penal settlement, if equipped for a slave voyage, or having slaves on board; and the effects would be speedily visible in the unwillingness of sailors to incur such serious risk of punishment, and the consequent diminution and eventual cessation of the supplies of slaves.

If any Power continue so irrational and immoral as to claim exemption for its subjects, and the desperadoes of other countries, who purchase its flag, from the penalties due to a breach of laws, which depend not for their power on the enactments of nations, but on the universal law of nature and the obligations of moral conscience, then the public opinion of a great and generous nation would second any Government in enforcing the claims of justice, and in disregarding pleas of immunity so monstrous and flagrant. Justice entails its necessities; and a nation who, for the preservation of the balance of European power, so often ventures into the excited arena of national misunderstandings, would assuredly not shrink from the temporary inconveniences resulting from a disinterested and magnanimous assertion of the rights of man on the shores of degraded and oppressed Africa.*

* The following sentiments were uttered during the recent debate on the Slave Trade in the House of Lords by one of the most eminent of living lawyers.

"With respect to the subject of the Slave Trade, he wished to say a few words more. It had been supposed that we were doing something very improper, and interfering with the rights of other nations. It was not so. We had relinquished the Slave Trade because we considered it an enormous crime: *in his opinion it was no less than the crime of piracy:* and he was sure that if his

2. The *second* practical measure of a remedial kind, by which it is proposed to render the present system of cruisers more effective for the suppression of the African Slave Trade, is the repeal of the tariff of 1846, which admits, on equal terms of duty, the sugar alike the produce of free labour and of slave labour.

It is difficult to conceive any case in which Britain could have taken a course of policy on this great question at once so suicidal and so inconsistent as the measure by which every previously-contracted debt of justice to our colonies is cancelled, and every suggestion of duty has been disobeyed. At one and the same moment we encourage and we prohibit the Slave Trade. By means of our squadron on the coast of Africa we impose a physical check on the Slave Trade; by giving an impulse to the productive resources of slave-employing countries in America we are introducing, at a back door, those secret supplies which feed the odious system.

The consequences are what were confidently predicted. West-Indian estates are depreciated to an unprecedented extent; West-Indian property is absolutely valueless; the planters are ruined; they are called upon to compete in cheapness of produce with those with whom they are at the same time forbidden to compete in the article of cheap labour. Slave produce finds its way into our market, and excludes the produce of free labour.* And concurrently

noble friend on the woolsack, and his noble friend below him (Lord Campbell), looked at the subject as lawyers, they would agree with him that *the Slave Trade was nothing less than piracy.*"—*Lord Denman's Speech, as reported in the "Times."*

* Although, as a general rule, it may be asserted that free labour is in the end more advantageous to the producer than slave labour, and "slavery, besides being a great crime, is a gross blunder;" yet

with all this, the Slave Trade is encouraged; the demand for slaves in Cuba and Brazils is greatly increased; the profits of the slave dealer are enhanced; and the slave ship, freighted with its cargo of living beings, is tempted by increased profits to brave the hazard of capture by our preventive cruisers.

And let it be borne in mind that this question is not at all to be judged of as one between free trade and monopoly. The question assumes a broader basis, and rests on the broad claims of consistency and justice. Let it be clearly understood, that in arguing for the repeal of this detrimental tariff we draw not a single argument from the *commercial* view of protection. Ours is rather a moral argument. Free trade is in no way compromised by the exclusion of slave-grown sugar from a theoretically equal, but a practically unequal, competition with free labour. We are not pleading the cause of the West-Indian planter, but the cause of the African slave.

When, in the year 1844, the principles of free trade were applied to the colonies, the West-Indian proprietor could have no valid grounds of complaint when he found the doors of unrestricted commerce thrown open more widely. Sugar was then admitted at an equal duty from all countries in which slavery was abolished, and free labour was employed in the production. He could not justly complain at being compelled to compete with producers, who, like

experience has proved that free labour cannot compete with the slave labour of those countries *where the Slave Trade exists, and there is a constant supply of fresh slave labour from Africa.*

There is also, in newly-emancipated colonies, a *transition state* from slavery to freedom, during which the Negro population will be unsettled, industrious habits will be but slowly acquired, and the legitimate benefits of emancipation will be for a time delayed.

himself, were limited to the employment of free labour.

But what the West-Indian interest, and, with them, the advocates of slave abolition may justly complain of, is, that in 1846 our colonies should be sacrificed to a popular abstract theory, without any contemporaneous consideration of interests which involved our national consistency, and our national justice. We have, with one hand, tried to crush the monster of Slave Trade by physical force: with the other hand, we have been allured, by the enticing prospect of cheap sugar, to give encouragement to American slavery, and to worship at the shrine of Mammon. It will be difficult to convince any but the living partisan—it will be impossible to convince the future annalist of the African Slave Trade—that Britain has not either been blinded to her views of national rectitude by the desire of trying a commercial theory, or been miserably seduced from the path of national consistency by the love of Mammon.

3. A *third* practical measure for giving increased effectiveness to the cruisers is to be found in the formation of additional settlements, and the erection of an increased number of trading forts along the coast. It has been abundantly shown in the evidence before the Parliamentary Committee that this system of trading settlements, under the protection of the occasional visits of a cruiser, has been felt to be a valuable machinery for calling out the latent resources of the native tribes, and raising the materials of a legitimate trade with foreigners. The expense of an establishment far beyond the scale which we contemplate has been shown to be inconsiderable, each fort not re-

quiring an annual outlay of more than 2000*l.** Except at a few important points of coast, the presence of one or two European non-commissioned officers would be sufficient, with a small number of native soldiers, as a defence against the possible attack of marauding tribes. The capabilities of the soil are unbounded: the resources of the country are great beyond conception. The present West-African trade, amounting to a million sterling of exports to this country, is a mere trifle compared with the vast field of commerce which might be cultivated by British enterprise, and which is rendered unproductive only by the Slave Trade.

"It is impossible," reports Her Majesty's Commissioner, "to have visited along a line of coast of some 2000 miles, and extended one's observations even ten miles from the coast, and not have considered the vast resources that might be developed in that country. This country is one which, if its climate were better, ought to become a new East Indies in the hands of England. There are hardly any products which we receive from India that are not to be found in Africa without cultivation. But the hands that are needed for cultivation the country is deprived of by the Slave Trade."†

4. But we require, concurrently with the various measures which have been suggested, that moral lever which can alone uproot from the depraved nature of man those habits and dispositions which are the most insuperable barrier to the progress of civili-

* F. Swanzy, Esq. Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, p. 56. Answer 953.

† West-African Commissioner's Report in 1841, p. 28 of Appendix to Report from Select Committee of House of Commons.

zation, and to the happiness of mankind. We need to strengthen our Christian Missions, to establish schools, to form industrial establishments, and to put into exercise the diversified machinery for training the understanding and controlling the heart, as a necessary accompaniment of the other measures within our reach. It is only the Gospel of Jesus Christ that can effectually eradicate those evil passions, which form the secret strength of the Slave Trade, and impel mankind to cruelty and wrong. Christianity achieved the moral triumph of emancipation at home: it is the cross of Christ, erected on the ruins of Pagan superstition and Mahomedan tyranny, that will most effectually expel slavery and the Slave Trade from Africa.

The inefficacy of mere commerce in introducing civilization is to be seen in the degradation of those parts of the Bight of Benin, which, although possessing the largest portion of the British trade, are nevertheless the scene of the deepest heathen demoralization. A witness truly observed before the Parliamentary Committee on this subject—"I think that mere commerce would not civilize a barbarous people: commerce alone, I repeat, would not enlighten and elevate a heathen and barbarous people. I think the case of Bonny (the principal place of the trade in palm-oil on the coast) is a sufficient illustration of that principle. I apprehend that the natives there are in as degraded and barbarous a state, after many years of commercial intercourse with this country, as the natives in any part of the world."*

We repeat, then, that Christian Missions are the

* Rev. J. Beecham. Evidence before Committee of House of Commons in 1842, p. 191. Answer 3633.

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grand instrumentality needed, in concurrence with the other measures which have been described. We desire to see every accessible point of the African coast occupied by Christian emigrants from Sierra Leone, carrying with them the elements of civilization and the arts of Christendom. We wish to give every nook of that coast the protection of the British flag, the opportunities of developing the resources of the soil, the blessings of peaceful agriculture, the advantages of legitimate commerce, and the moral influence of a Christian Mission. We wish not to emulate France at Algiers in extending the boundaries of national dominion, but to raise a vast moral empire, which shall be divested of the narrow interests of self-aggrandizement, and the broad foundations of which shall be laid in the peace, the freedom, and the happiness of mankind.

We have in Sierra Leone the requisite agency for this great work. We have a large body of Native Christians, full of simple devotion, and earnestly sympathizing in the woes of their fatherland. We have there the materials of a Native Ministry, and a body of Native Linguists, acclimated to a tropical region, speaking the various languages of the interior, imbued with the love of home, and instructed in the divine religion of the Gospel, all available for the purposes of Christian philanthropy.

Africa owes much of her present degradation to civilization set free from the moral restraints of Christianity. The discovery of the Western hemisphere, and the impulse given thereby to the commerce of the Old World, opened a door to the traffic in compulsory labour, and gave birth to the West-African Slave Trade. As the West-African Slave Trade is a modern

horror introduced by contact with Christendom; so let Christianity at length exert her legitimate influence in repairing the evil. So will future generations, while appreciating the gift, bless also the giver; and Christian Britain be remembered in future ages as the greatest benefactress of mankind, when, in the language of prophecy, "Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands unto God;" no longer to implore, in the helplessness of her slavery, the pity of other nations, but to render the thanksgivings of conscious deliverance to the Great Redeemer of the world.

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